3. THE ROLE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Introduction

Local governments are essential partners in achieving California's greenhouse gas reduction goals. They have broad influence and, in some cases, exclusive authority over significant emission sources through their planning and permitting processes, local ordinances, outreach and education efforts, and municipal operations. In fact, many of the measures identified in the Proposed Scoping Plan rely on actions that local governments can take. These actions, outlined later in this section, demonstrate how local governments taking a sustainability approach to their decisions can greatly impact GHG emission reductions within their community and collectively, the state. In order to most effectively achieve the goals of AB 32, cities and counties statewide will need to actively engage in implementing Proposed Scoping Plan measures at the local level and undertake other emission reduction actions that make sense for each community.

Many local governments have already implemented programs to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Over 120 California cities have signed on to the U.S. Conference of Mayors Climate Protection Agreement. In addition, over 30 California cities and counties have committed to developing and implementing Climate Action Plans. These communities have not only demonstrated leadership in taking initiative to reduce GHG emissions, they are also reaping important co-benefits, including local economic benefits, more sustainable communities, and improved quality of life. Lessons learned from these early efforts can help inform actions by other local governments going forward.

Comprehensive Local Approaches

ARB encourages cities and counties to develop a collaborative, comprehensive approach to reducing GHG emissions and address climate change within their own communities.

A local government's comprehensive approach to reducing GHG emissions can be included in their General Plan or take the form of a separate Climate Action Plan. For example, many local governments are incorporating appropriate climate objectives within each existing element of their general plan. This method may facilitate a more timely, comprehensive, and coordinated response. Key elements of any comprehensive plan addressing greenhouse gas emissions should include (1) development of municipal and community-level GHG emissions inventories, (2) adoption of local emissions reductions mechanisms and strategies that can be implemented through local plans, programs, codes and ordinances, (3) establishment of emission reduction goals and 4) development of an emissions reporting mechanism to track progress toward those goals.

To provide local governments guidance on how to inventory and report greenhouse gas emissions at both municipal and community level ARB will provide protocols for accurate measurement. ARB recently adopted the Local Government Operations Protocol which inventories emissions from government buildings, facilities, vehicles, wastewater and potable water treatment facilities, landfill and composting facilities, and

other governments operations. ARB is also developing an additional protocol for community wide emissions. This protocol will go beyond just municipal operations and include emissions from the community as a whole including residential and commercial energy consumption and transportation activity.

Once an accurate inventory has been established, ARB encourages local governments to adopt a reduction goal for municipal operations emissions and move toward establishing similar goals for community emissions that parallels the State commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 15 percent from current levels by 2020.[24] Local governments that meet or exceed this level of reductions prior to 2020 should be properly recognized as discussed below. Early emission reduction actions taken by and fully accounted by jurisdictions should also be counted toward any reduction goals. To consolidate climate action resources and aid local governments in their emission reduction efforts, the ARB is developing various tools and guidance for use by local governments, including the next generation of best practices, case studies, a climate calculator, and other decision support tools.

As local governments assess the GHG impacts of their community, transportation-related emissions represent one component that should be evaluated at the local level and within the larger regional context. The relationship between GHG inventories at the local and regional level is complex and will be worked out during the protocol development process. Local governments should look to reduce local transportation related emission through local transit, parking policy, bike/walk infrastructure and other related programs. In addition to action at the local level, local governments should also work collaboratively with neighboring jurisdictions and the regional agencies, in the context of regional transportation planning efforts, to ensure regional transportation-related GHG reductions targets are met or exceeded.

In recognition of local achievements, the Institute for Local Governments (ILG) is developing a program to recognize local governments that take progressive action to reduce GHG emissions at the municipal and community scale. Part of that program is a goal-setting structure. Under its current draft form, local governments would be recognized as they achieve various performance standards with a gold level of 20 percent below current levels indicating the highest standard. A platinum level is also being considered for local governments whose actions result in emission reductions above and beyond these levels. In order to achieve recognition, local governments must prepare a baseline inventory, develop a climate action plan, implement climate actions in 10 opportunity areas, and report progress. ARB views this as an opportunity for local governments to showcase their leadership role as they pursue more aggressive reduction goals and is considering ways to provide additional considerations for State funding programs linked to performance

Table 3 provides an illustration of measures in the Proposed Scoping Plan in which local government plays a role to achieve greenhouse gas reductions.

[24] For the state this is approximately equivalent to a 30 percent reduction from projected 2020 levels.

Appendix C: Role of Local Government
Interaction of Local Government with Proposed Scoping Plan Measures

Table 3

Scoping Plan Measures	Potential Local Government Actions
Energy Efficiency	• Increase Utility Energy Efficiency Programs (either as municipal owners or partnership with local Utilities) • Reduce energy consumption and install solar water heating systems within local government owned/operated facilities and operations • Promote the following programs within the jurisdiction: o Reduction in energy consumption through programs to promote better home insulation, solar water heating systems, and solar and geothermal heating/cooling systems in homes/businesses o Incentives for building owners and developers to participate in "Million Solar Roofs" project for solar-electrical systems, which includes overall efficiency upgrades to eligible structures.
Renewable Portfolio Standard	• Achieve a minimum of 33 percent renewables portfolio standard for local government owned utilities.
Green Buildings	• Facilitate green building construction, renovation, operation and maintenance at local government owned/operated facilities. • Implement the State adopted green building code (effective 2010), and provide training to local architects, engineers and developers. • Site buildings close to public transportation and services, and providing amenities that encourage walking and cycling, offering further GHG reducing potential. • Promote (lead by example) by requiring all new buildings and new residential and commercial developments to exceed existing energy standards and meet nationally-recognized building sustainability standards, such as LEED Gold standards.

Scoping Plan Measures	Potential Local Government Actions
Recycling and Waste	• Control landfill methane emissions (for jurisdictions that own/operate landfills). • Adopt Zero Waste and Environmentally Preferable Purchasing policies. • Increase diversion from landfills (commercial and residential recycling and composting/purchase of compost).
High GWP Gases	• Ensure proper maintenance of fleet vehicles and prevent leakage of motor vehicle A/C refrigerants. • Ensure proper handling/disposal of waste refrigerants.
Sustainable Forests	• Encourage land-use decisions that conserve forest lands. • Promote urban forest projects (shading/energy co-benefits). • Make public investment to purchase and preserve forests and woodlands.
Water	• Improve municipal water system energy efficiency/usage. • Increase water recycling. • Reuse urban runoff.
Transportation	• Participate in regional blueprint planning efforts and in the development of sustainable communities and alternative planning strategies to achieve regional GHG goals. • Incorporate local transportation GHG reduction measures in General Plans including funding and promotion of local transit systems, bike/walk infrastructure, local parking policies, car sharing, etc.. • Promote employee transit incentive programs, including, telework, carpooling, and parking cash-out policies.
Vehicle Efficiency	• Properly inflate tires and practice routine fleet maintenance.

Comprehensive local programs will address all greenhouse gas emissions that occur within a local government's jurisdiction. These not only include local government operations as discussed above, but also apply to businesses, residences, local transportation activity, agricultural operations and various other industries. ARB encourages local governments to partner with special districts, such as school districts, transportation planning agencies and waste and water utilities that provide services within their jurisdictions. Among the areas that local governments can focus on include:

- *Municipal and Community Energy.* Local governments can influence the carbon content of energy provided to their community through municipal utility operations, as well as the amount of energy used by community businesses and residents through building codes, conservation programs and other mechanisms.

- *Municipal and Community Waste and Recycling.* Local governments can change the carbon footprint of their jurisdiction's waste and recycling operations through collection system adjustments and promoting waste prevention and recycling to community businesses and residents.

- *Municipal and Community Water and Wastewater Systems.* Local governments can support community-wide water conservation and reclamation program efforts.

- *Urban Greening and Urban Forests*. Local governments can reduce greenhouse gas emissions and provide additional benefits to communities through the creation, enhancement, and expansion of community green spaces that provide multiple benefits. Urban forests that are strategically and properly planned, planted, and maintained, can provide reductions in energy use through shading buildings, homes, streets, pedestrian walkways, and densely-developed urban cores; thereby reducing surface and ambient temperatures and requiring less energy to cool.

- *Community Transportation*. Local governments can directly influence the local transportation planning processes to increase the use of low carbon travel such as transit, bicycling, walking and carpooling. They can also partner with regional planning agencies to create a sustainable vision for the future that accommodates population growth in a carbon efficient way. The recent passage and signing of SB 375 (Steinberg, Chapter 728, Statutes of 2008) creates a process whereby regions work to integrate development patterns, the transportation network and other transportation measures and policies to achieve GHG emission reductions. The implementation of regional transportation-related GHG emission targets and SB 375 are discussed in more detail in the transportation sector in this appendix.

- *Community Design.* Local governments have the ability to directly influence both the siting and design of new residential and commercial developments in a way that reduces GHG associated with energy, water, waste, and vehicle travel, which may include zoning for more compact and mixed-use residential and commercial development and adopting policies to promote infill and affordable housing.

Supporting Local Action

State, regional, local, and non-governmental stakeholders must work together to prioritize and create policies, programs, incentives, guidance, and funding to assist local actions to help meet the State's climate change goals. These will be developed on an ongoing basis. Currently, there are many supporting agencies and programs available to assist local governments in their efforts to reduce greenhouse gases. Guidance to measure community GHG emissions and resources for best practices continue to be developed and are being refined. Here are just two examples:

- In partnership with the ARB, California Climate Action Registry, ICLEI-Local Governments for Sustainability, and The Climate Registry have developed a Municipal Operations Protocol and are developing a Community Level Protocol to provide a standardized set of guidelines to assist local governments in quantifying and reporting greenhouse gas emissions associated with their community.

- The California Climate Action Network, created by the Institute for Local Government, has developed a best practices framework that offers suggestions for local action in 10 opportunity areas, including energy efficiency, water and wastewater systems, waste reduction and recycling, and efficient transportation, land use and community design. They are also working with local governments and the ARB, among others, to establish a climate leadership recognition program that encourages support for local efforts and acknowledgement of successful programs.

Because ARB recognized early that many of the proposed measures to reduce GHG emissions rely on local government actions, ARB identified Early Action measures to develop tools in support of local government. ARB will continue to work closely with local agencies to encourage and provide tools for the active involvement of all cities and counties in the effort to reduce greenhouse gases and ensure a sustainable future. To consolidate climate action resources and aid local governments in their emission reduction efforts, the ARB is developing various tools and guidance for use by local governments, including the next generation of best practices, case studies, a climate calculator, and other decision support tools. ARB will also work to help identify resource needs and funding opportunities for local governments to undertake these efforts. As outlined in AB 32 Section 38565, a priority of ARB is for public and private investment to be directed to the most disadvantaged communities, and that small businesses, schools and other community institutions are able to participate in and benefit from statewide efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.